

HOME VISITING TASK FORCE
Wednesday, August 31, 2011
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Meeting Notes

Members Present:

Chicago

Rebecca Bunn, Jeanna Capito, Brenda Cervantes, Namrita Chawla, Shannon Christian, Claire Dobbins, Claire Dunham, Bill Filan, Melanie Garrett, Gaylord Gieseke, Elissa Gitlow, Phyllis Glink, Theresa Hawley, Artesia Hunter, Madelyn James, Leslie Janes, Colleen Jones, TeeNeka Jones, Joanne Kelly, Teresa Kelly, Kathy Kern, Jon Korfmacher, Mattie McLaurin, Dawn Melchiorre, Cynthia Northington, Mary Jo O'Brien, Greg O'Donnell, Sally Puleo, Mayra Quinones, Diana Rauner, Mike Shaver, Diane Scruggs, Kathy Stohr, Sheryl Stoller, Mark Valentine, Candace Williams, Kelly Woodlock, Alice Wyatt, Karen Yarbrough

Springfield

Nancie Brown, Dorris Freery, Denise McCaffrey, Bill McKenzie, Ralph Schubert, Whitney Steele, Erin Tredmoore, Vikkie Thompson, Janelle Weldin-Frisch, Cindy Zumwalt

Phone

Karen Ayala, Jennifer Borgognoni, Juanona Brewster, Clare Eldredge, Dorris Feery, Cheryl Floyd, Linda Gilkerson, Susy Gonzalez, Theresa Heaton, Elizabeth Heneks, John McDonnell, Aissa Norris, Andrea Palmer, Carmen Perez, Mary Salisbury, Barbara Shipp, Glendean Sisk, Mendy Smith, Laressa Witt

Welcome and Introductions

Co-chair Diana Rauner welcomed the group and facilitated introductions. The minutes from the May 27, 2011 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Home Visiting Systems Development Progress

Co-chair Gaylord Gieseke noted that it has been a busy summer since the last Task Force meeting in May, given the three MIECHV applications that were submitted in June and July. She explained that Teresa Kelly would describe each application in more detail, but first she would provide a history of the Home Visiting Task Force up to this point so that the group has the full scope of work in mind. Gaylord directed members to a blue chart in their handouts titled "Home Visiting Systems Development Progress," which summarizes the recent milestones of Illinois' home visiting system:

- In 2008, the Home Visiting Task Force is formed as a permanent committee under the Illinois Early Learning Council to set the stage for new opportunities at the state and federal level. Since its inception, the Task Force has operated with a "big tent" approach, inclusive of multiple evidence-based models implemented through various funding streams and agencies.
- The HVTF quickly became a vehicle for guiding the Strong Foundations project, Illinois original Evidence-Based Home Visiting grant from the Children's Bureau. Strong Foundations focused on statewide infrastructure development, aiming to integrate resource allocation, community systems development, training (on the "big four" topics: domestic violence, mental health, developmental delay and substance abuse issues), and monitoring and data collection.

- The Affordable Care Act passed in 2010, which included the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program and also restored funding for the earlier Evidence-Based Home Visiting grant. In Illinois, these two efforts were combined as the Strong Foundations Partnership, maintaining the earlier focus on statewide infrastructure enhancement while expanding programs in high-risk neighborhoods identified through the statewide needs assessment.

Next, Teresa described the three MIECHV applications that have been completed over the summer. Illinois has recently received the FY2010 formula award which will fund community systems building, universal screening, data collection in benchmark areas, and program expansion in target communities. During a conference call with HRSA, our federal project officers commended Illinois' application and said it was among the best in the country. However, there are two restrictions placed on our grant approval: we must improve our data measurement system and operationally define performance measures for each benchmark and strengthen the connection between the home visiting programs and health services within the community. To address the first issue, a RFP for an off the shelf data collection system is being developed and will be released by February 2012. Currently, target communities are developing their plans for the grant which will be submitted in September. Kathy Staten from DHS is leading a team to work with the target communities. There is also a plan with 11 members who review the community plans and recommend funding allocations, which will be distributed to communities in October. By September 30, Illinois should receive an award notice for both the formula FY2011 proposal and the competitive FY2011 application. In the meantime, the Governor's Office and DHS is working with the leadership of the Birth to Three Monitoring Workgroup to develop a monitoring system based on their recommendations. Community representatives asked what opportunities they would have to provide input and it was agreed that a meeting would be scheduled prior to the release of the RFP.

Gaylord concluded the conversation by saying that a reason we wanted to walk through this timeline in detail is to see the broader picture of the Home Visiting Task Force. Although a significant focus has recently been on MIECHV and its target communities, we want to keep in mind that the statewide infrastructure is a key part of this effort and the grant is meant to support the entire system. As we go through this process and work through its challenges, we are gaining knowledge that will inform the entire system. We want to keep those lessons in mind as we transfer our discussion to the challenge fund and think of the ways our work can be integrated with that effort.

Early Learning Challenge Grant

Diana provided background on the Early Learning Challenge grant, which has been in development since President Obama took office and many have lobbied since then to see it enacted. Like the original Race to the Top competition, it is expected that there will be few winners although we are unsure of exactly how many. Applications are due on October 19 and awards will be announced in December. The Early Learning Council is providing the strategic direction for the application, and working with consultants Theresa Hawley and Jon Furr who are writing the grant. Diana gave an overview of the five key areas of reform that successful Early Learning Challenge applications will address: successful state systems; high-quality, accountable programs; promoting early learning and development outcomes for children; great early childhood education workforce; and measuring outcomes and progress. Task Force members then generated the following areas for connection between the home visiting and Early Learning Challenge projects:

- **Build on Existing Infrastructure**

For over 25 years, Illinois has made significant investments in programs to support early childhood development programs, specifically implementing evidence-based home visiting programs as a strength-based, family-centered strategy for reducing child abuse and neglect and giving at-risk children the best chance for success in school and in life. Fortunately, Illinois has embraced a “big tent” approach and supported the development of multiple evidence-based models (Early Head Start, Healthy Families Illinois, Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers) and created a statewide system that supports multiple models.

- **Universal Screening**

Target communities for the Strong Foundations Partnership (MIECHV) will be piloting centralized intake systems that can offer a “universal touch” to ensure the most at-risk children are identified and all families are connected to the programs that best meet their needs. Given the multiple evidence-based models and innovative program supports that enhance them (e.g. doula, Fussy Baby Network), communities can offer a continuum of services rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. A universal screening system is key to ensuring that families are matched with the appropriate services based on their needs. It also allows providers to move beyond the perspective of a single program model towards what should be available for everyone.

- **Community Systems Development**

The community systems work of the Home Visiting Task Force supports the development of local collaborations across the broad array of early childhood programs and services at the community level. The creation of local partnerships allows the full range of early childhood programs and services to maximize available resources, reduce duplication of services, expedite referrals, and ultimately better serve young children and families. Collaborations can build off of existing networks (e.g. All our Kids) and coordinate various service delivery systems (e.g. Early Intervention, center or home-based Early/Head Start).

- **Parent Engagement**

The training funded through the Strong Foundations Partnership develops home visitors skills in working with families facing the “big four” issues: domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse, and developmental delay. Additionally, home visitors work with parents can more broadly support their social-emotional development, increase their understanding of children’s growth and development, and promote their engagement in their children’s learning experiences.

- **Home Visitor Credential**

The Home Visiting Task Force supports a specialized credential for home visitors as a method of promoting quality in evidence-based home visiting programs. The state of Illinois’ infant toddler credential is ideally suited for home visitors, as it is anchored in a well-articulated set of competencies that address the specific knowledge of infant-toddler development, parent-child relationships, and the relevant skills needed by home visitors working in evidence-based birth to three programs.

- **State Systems Integration**

The Strong Foundations Partnership promotes coordination at the state level to integrate resource allocation, community systems development, training, technical assistance, and

monitoring and data collection across state agency partners and the existing network of home visiting programs. Integration with the Early Learning Challenge application can allow this coordinated home visiting system to connect to the broader early childhood education and health systems.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Gaylord informed the group that the Executive Committee will be considering the Workgroup structure to support the ongoing work of MIECHV and Task Force members will be informed of any new opportunities and invited to participate. Shannon Christian added that the Governor's office has developed a website for comments on the Early Learning Challenge grant that Theresa Kelly reviews. Gaylord then adjourned the meeting and reminded the group of the final meeting for 2011 on Tuesday, November 15 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.